



A gloomy Groundhog Day: Punxsutawney Phil says more winter

PUNXSUTAWNEY, Pa. (AP) —

There will be six more weeks of winter, Punxsutawney Phil predicted as he emerged from his burrow on a snowy Tuesday morning to perform his Groundhog Day duties.

Members of Phil's "inner circle" woke up the furry critter at 7:25 a.m. at Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, to see whether he would see his shadow or not.

Shortly after this year's prediction was revealed, one of the members of the inner circle shared a message he said Phil had told him earlier in the day: "After winter, you're looking forward to one of the most beautiful and brightest springs you've ever seen."

Another member of the "inner circle" noted the

uniqueness of the past year.

"People have been referencing Groundhog Day. It has felt like at times we're all living the same day over and over again," one of the members said. "Groundhog Day also shows us that the monotony ends. The cycle will be broken."

"Today actually is Groundhog Day, there's only one," he added. "There is quite literally a new day coming over the horizon."

The spectacle that is Groundhog Day still went on, but because of the coronavirus pandemic, revelers weren't able to see Phil and celebrate in person: This year, it was all virtual and included cardboard cutouts to represent spectators.

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Groundhog Club handler A.J. Dereume holds Punxsutawney Phil, the weather prognosticating groundhog, during the 135th celebration of Groundhog Day on Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, Pa., Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021.

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Trump lawyer: Impeachment case 'undemocratic,' ill-advised

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats are using the upcoming Senate impeachment trial of Donald Trump as a political "weapon" to bar the former president from seeking office again and are pursuing a case that is "undemocratic" and unconstitutional, one of his lawyers says.

Trump faces trial next week on accusations that he incited a harrowing and deadly siege at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, when loyalists in town for a rally supporting the president overran the police and violently stormed the building. The House passed a single article of impeachment against Trump one week before he left office, triggering a trial that Democrats say is necessary to hold Trump publicly accountable for the attack. If Trump is convicted, Congress could bar him from holding public office again. Whether the Senate trial is constitutional is a point of contention because of the unique circumstances: never before has a president faced an impeachment trial after leaving office. Democrats say there is precedent, pointing to an 1876 impeachment of a secretary of war who resigned his office in a last-



In this Wednesday, Jan. 20, 2021, file photo, President Donald Trump waves as he boards Marine One on the South Lawn of the White House, in Washington, en route to his Mar-a-Lago Florida Resort.

ditch attempt to avoid an impeachment trial. The Senate held it anyway. On the eve of expected legal briefs from lawyers for both sides, Trump attorney David Schoen's appearance on Fox News Monday night previewed some of the arguments he plans to make at the trial. He called the case needlessly divisive.

"It's also the most ill-advised legislative action that I've seen in my lifetime," Schoen

said. Trump is the first president in American history to be impeached twice. He was acquitted at a Senate trial last year over his contacts with his Ukrainian counterpart, but was acquitted by the Senate. Impeachment, Schoen said, "is the weapon they've tried to use against him."

The new case was an effort to bar Trump from ever running for office again, Schoen said, "and that's

about as undemocratic as you can get."

The Constitution specifies that disqualification from office can be a punishment for an impeachment conviction.

Schoen, a criminal defense and civil rights lawyer, and Bruce Castor, a former county prosecutor in Pennsylvania, were announced as Trump's legal team on Sunday evening, one day after it was revealed that the former president had

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parted ways with another set of attorneys in what one person described as a mutual decision.

In an interview with The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Schoen said he did not plan to argue that Trump lost the election because of fraud, as Trump has repeatedly insisted, and would instead argue that the trial itself is unconstitutional. He also said he'll make the case that his words were protected by the First Amendment and did not incite a riot.

House Democrats plan to lay out what happened on Jan. 6 in graphic detail — an effort to get through to Senate Republicans who have largely avoided talking about the attack itself and Trump's role in it, instead focusing on the process of the impeachment trial. They are expected to play videos and verbally recount the violence of the day in hopes of stirring the Republicans, most of whom fled the Senate that day as the rioters broke in.

The nine House impeachment managers who will argue the case also are expected to lay out how they believe Trump's actions over the previous several months led up to it and eventually incited the insurrectionists to act. □



Groundhog Club President Jeff Lundy interacts with Punxsutawney Phil, the weather prognosticating groundhog, during the 135th celebration of Groundhog Day in Punxsutawney, Pa. Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021.

Associated Press

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A livestream, which had more than 15,000 viewers at one point, played footage from previous Groundhog Days ahead of the big reveal.

Then of course, the prognosticator of prognosticators emerged at dawn. The lore goes that if he sees his shadow as he did this year, there will be six more weeks of winter. If he doesn't,

spring comes early. Wearing top hats, members of the club summoned Phil from a new tree stump. "You look beautiful," club president Jeff Lundy told Phil, who directed members to one of two scrolls. A club member announced, "We have all passed through the darkness of night, but now see hope in morning's bright light. But now when I turn to see, there's a perfect shadow cast of me."

The livestream from Gobbler's Knob, a tiny hill just outside Punxsutawney about 65 miles (105 kilometers) northeast of Pittsburgh, is made possible by the Pennsylvania Tourism Office's Holi-stay PA. Tuesday's event there — Groundhog Day is always Feb. 2 — was Phil's 135th

turn as a weather oracle. Phil this year, like many years in the past, gave his forecast during a major snowstorm that hit the entire Northeast.

The annual event has its origin in a German legend about a furry rodent. Records dating to the late 1800s show Phil has predicted longer winters more than 100 times. The 2020 forecast called for an early spring — however, Phil didn't say anything about a pandemic.

According to records dating back to 1887, Phil has predicted winter more than 100 times, the club said. Ten years were lost because no records were kept.

Punxsutawney Phil may be the most famous groundhog seer but he's certainly not the only one.

There are two other high-profile "imposters," as the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club calls them, in the region.

Connecticut marked Groundhog Day with a hedgehog making the prediction after the state's official groundhog, Chuckles X, died last year. Like Phil, Phoebe predicted another six weeks of winter after seeing its shadow at the Lutz Children's Museum in Manchester.

New York City's Staten Island Chuck disagreed, predicting an early spring in a video shown on the Staten Island Zoo's Facebook page.

"We're going to have an early spring! Spring is coming," Brian Gomez, of event sponsor Investors Bank said in a video message. □

Biden boosting vaccine allotments, financing for virus costs

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR and ZEKE MILLER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden's administration announced Tuesday that it is moving to expand access to COVID-19 vaccines, freeing up more doses for states and beginning to distribute them to retail pharmacies next week. The push comes amid new urgency to speed vaccinations to prevent the spread of potentially more serious strains of the virus that has killed more than 445,000 Americans.

Starting next week, 1 million doses will be distributed to some 6,500 pharmacies across the country, the White House said. The administration is also boosting by 500,000 the weekly allocation of vaccines sent directly to states and territories for the coming weeks, up to 10.5 million. It is allowing state and local governments to receive additional federal dollars to cover previously incurred expenses relating to the pandemic. Coronavirus coordinator Jeff Zients announced the moves on a call with the nation's governors Tuesday morning and then detailed them to the public in an afternoon news conference. Drugstores have become a mainstay for flu shots and shingles vaccines, and the industry is capable of vaccinating tens of millions of people monthly. "This will provide more sites for people to get vaccinated in their communities," Zients said.

"This is a critical step to provide the public with conven-



In this March 17, 2020, file photo, Pharmacist Evelyn Kim, wears a mask and gloves at the CVS pharmacy at Target in the Tenleytown area of Washington.

Associated Press

nient trusted places to get vaccinated in their communities," he added.

The number of participating pharmacies and the allocation of vaccines are expected to accelerate as drug makers increase production. The White House said the ultimate goal was to distribute the vaccines through more than 40,000 pharmacies nationwide. State and local guidelines will determine who is eligible to get a shot at their neighborhood pharmacy. Availability will be limited at first.

"Getting it into pharmacies is a viable approach," said Dan Mendelson, founder of the health care industry consulting firm Avalere Health. "The pharmacies know how to move people in and out."

Part of the reason the vaccination campaign got off

to a slow start, he added, is that states lacked their own infrastructure for mass vaccinations.

The partnership with drugstores was originally announced by the Trump administration in November. At that time, no coronavirus vaccines had been approved. Participating are major chains like CVS, Walgreens and Rite Aid, big box stores such as Walmart and Costco, and supermarket pharmacies. CVS said it will receive 250,000 doses initially, to be distributed to pharmacies in 11 states. The pharmacy doses will be distributed to states by population, but a priority will be to get the vaccine to minority communities that have suffered a disproportionately high toll of disease and deaths from the virus, Zients said.

He said the Centers for Dis-

ease Control and Prevention was "making sure that we are picking pharmacies in that first phase that are located in areas that are harder to reach to ensure that we have equitable distribution of the pharmacy doses." Walgreens said it was selected in part to "optimize vaccine access in medically underserved areas."

The 1 million doses being shipped to pharmacies will be on top of the increased allotments to states over the coming three weeks. The Biden administration has sought to increase certainty to state governments on their upcoming allocations to streamline deliveries and prevent stockpiling of second doses for the two-dose regimens.

The Tuesday announcement comes a day after Dr. Anthony Fauci, the gov-

ernment's top infectious-disease expert, called on Americans to get vaccinated as soon as they're eligible to prevent further mutations of the virus. The U.S. is tracking the spread of potentially more virulent and treatment-resistant variants.

"Viruses cannot mutate if they don't replicate," Fauci said. "And if you stop their replication by vaccinating widely and not giving the virus an open playing field to continue to respond to the pressures that you put on it, you will not get mutations."

The U.S. government has already started working with vaccine manufacturers on potential booster shots to enhance protection against the variants.

Biden's move to allow for an additional \$3 billion to \$5 billion in retroactive funding to state and local governments for reimbursement of pandemic-related spending was expected to free up more money for vaccine distribution.

"States will be fully repaid for things like masks, gloves and the mobilization of the National Guard, and they can use the additional resources for vaccination efforts and emergency supplies moving forward," Zients said.

That is on top of additional assistance to state and local governments from the Federal Emergency Management Agency already authorized by the Biden administration for them to stand up and support vaccination sites across the country. □

3 backcountry skiers missing after large Colorado avalanche

SILVERTON, Colo. (AP) — Three backcountry skiers are missing after being swept up in a large avalanche in southwestern Colorado and a search for them was underway on Tuesday, a day after the skiers disappeared.

The slide happened between the towns of Silverton and Ophir on Monday in an area locally known as The Nose, according to the Colorado Avalanche Information Center.

Four skiers were fully buried in

the debris, and one of them was found, suffering from minor injuries, officials said.

A search-and-rescue team was still trying to find the missing skiers Tuesday morning after searching into the night on Monday.

The avalanche was triggered on a northeast-facing slope near treeline at an elevation of about 11,500 feet (3,505 meters) in elevation. Dangerous avalanche conditions in the area were hurting the search effort, and emergency re-

sponders could temporarily call off the effort, San Juan County spokeswoman DeAnne Gallegos told The Durango Herald on Tuesday.

Crews triggered avalanches to help mitigate the danger, and natural slides also happened throughout the day.

Authorities have not identified the skiers who were caught in the slide. At least four skiers have died in earlier backcountry avalanches in Colorado so far this winter, most recently in late December, accord-

ing to the Colorado Avalanche Information Center.

Elsewhere around the U.S. this winter, three other people have died in backcountry avalanches in the so far this winter, including two in Utah and one in Wyoming.

The avalanche information center listed the northern San Juan Range in Colorado, where the latest slide happened, as being a "considerable" danger for avalanches and urged skiers going there to take caution when finding routes. □

FBI: 2 agents killed, 3 wounded, suspect dead in Florida

Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. (AP) — Two FBI agents were killed and three wounded in a shooting that erupted on Tuesday when they arrived to search an apartment in a child pornography case, a confrontation that marked one of the bloodiest days in FBI history. The suspect is believed to have killed himself.

The violence forced residents in the Fort Lauderdale suburb of Sunrise to huddle inside their homes as a SWAT team stormed the apartment building and police helicopters circled overhead.

FBI Director Christopher A. Wray identified the two slain agents as Daniel Alfin and Laura Schwartzenberger, both of whom specialized in investigating crimes against children.

Two of the wounded agents were taken to hospitals to be treated and were in stable condition, Leverock said. The third did not require hospitalization, Wray said.

Based on a preliminary investigation, federal officials believe the suspect fatally shot himself, according to a law enforcement official familiar with the matter. The



Law enforcement officers walk near the entrance to an apartment complex where a shooting wounded several FBI agents while serving an arrest warrant, Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021, in Sunrise, Fla.

Associated Press

person cautioned that an official cause of death has not yet been determined and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the investigation publicly.

The shooting happened around 6 a.m. in a middle-class neighborhood of single family homes, duplexes and apartment buildings

located west of Fort Lauderdale, near the Everglades.

The gunfire erupted with about four shots — "Boom, boom, boom, boom!" said Julius McLymont, whose house borders the Water Terrace apartment complex where the suspect was barricaded.

At first McLymont thought the gunfire was a car backfiring, then two minutes

later he heard about five more shots. He went outside and looked over his fence as police cars and ambulances rushed in. Then he saw officers working on someone lying on the ground before they loaded the person into an ambulance.

A SWAT team appeared next, with officers donning riot gear. Then they went around the building, yelling,

"Go, go, go!" McLymont said. He said he couldn't see the apartment where the shooting happened from his location.

Hours later, Sunrise Police urged residents of Water Terrace to remain inside their homes while law enforcement blocked the entrances to their community. The FBI agents had come to the apartment complex to serve a federal search warrant in connection with a case involving child pornography and violent crimes against children, according to Miami FBI Agent Michael D. Leverock and FBI Agents Association President Brian O'Hare.

The shootings marked one of the bloodiest days in FBI history in South Florida and among the deadliest nationally as well, according to the FBI website.

Schwartzenberger, 43, had been an agent with the FBI since December 2005 and worked in the Miami field office on a squad of agents handling violent crimes against children, according to court records. Her work primarily focused on tracking offenders who sexually exploit children online and investigating other crimes against children. □

2 California supermarkets closing after city orders pay hike



In this June 15, 2017, file photo, bagged purchases from a Kroger grocery store sit in a shopping cart in Flowood, Miss.

Associated Press

LONG BEACH, Calif. (AP) — Kroger Co. will close two Southern California supermarkets in response to a local ordinance requiring extra pay for certain grocery employees working during the pandemic.

The decision announced by the company Monday follows a unanimous vote last month by the Long Beach City Council mandating a 120-day increase of \$4 an hour for employees of supermarkets with

at least 300 employees nationwide and more than 15 in Long Beach. Kroger said it will close a Ralphs market and a Food 4 Less on April 17, the Press-Telegram reported.

"As a result of the City of Long Beach's decision to pass an ordinance mandating Extra Pay for grocery workers, we have made the difficult decision to permanently close long-struggling store locations in Long Beach," the company said in a statement.

The statement added: "This misguided action by the Long Beach City Council oversteps the traditional bargaining process and applies to some, but not all, grocery workers in the city." A city statement characterized Kroger's decision as

"unfortunate for workers, shoppers and the company." A similar hazard pay wage increase has been approved by the city of Montebello and is being considered in Los Angeles and Pomona.

A lawsuit filed by the California Grocers Association claims that the Long Beach ordinance interferes with the collective bargaining process between grocery stores and unions representing workers.

An association official said Monday that an increase of \$4 an hour represents about a 28% increase in labor costs.

"There's no way grocers can absorb that big of a cost increase without an offset somewhere else, considering grocers oper-

ate with razor thin margins and many stores already operate in the red," the association's president and CEO Ron Fong said in a statement.

The Long Beach ordinance was approved during a Jan. 19 meeting in which council members and Mayor Robert Garcia said that many grocery stores gave employees hazard pay during the early stages of the pandemic but later phased it out.

"These folks that are working at these markets and these grocery stores are heroes," Garcia said at the time. "This is nothing new. They have received this type of additional pay in the past and if they deserved it in the past, they deserve it today." □

U.K. report urges need for nature to be at heart of economics

By PAN PYLAS

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — A report commissioned by the British government is urging a radical transformation in the way that countries around the world assess the state of their economies by elevating the natural world as a key element in their economic planning.

The review of the economics of biodiversity by Professor Partha Dasgupta concludes that nature needs to become as valued as traditional gauges of economic wealth such as profits in the future.

In the 600-page review that was commissioned in 2019 by Britain's Treasury, the University of Cambridge economist warned that current economic growth and prosperity have "come at a devastating cost to nature." He said declines in biodiversity and the environment's ability to provide food, clean water and air are "fueling extreme risk and uncertainty for our economies and well-being." The coronavirus pandemic and the associated economic calamity is just



In this file photo dated Thursday, Aug. 27, 2020 fishermen work in the Tapajos river in Alter do Chao, district of Santarem, Para state, Brazil.

Associated Press

one illustration, he said, of what can happen when habitats are destroyed and species exploited.

"Nature is more than a mere economic good," he said. "Nature nurtures and nourishes us, so we will think of assets as durable entities that not only have use value, but may also have intrinsic worth."

Dasgupta called on the world to ensure demands on nature do not exceed sustainable supplies, by changing food production and consumption, investing in natural solutions such as restoring forests and protecting natural habitats. He said coordinated action now would in the long-run be less costly and would

also help tackle other issues such as climate change and poverty.

Additionally, he pointed to a need to move away from using gross domestic product, or GDP, as a measure of economic success toward one that accounts for the benefits of investing in natural assets such as forests, soils and oceans.

"As a measure of economic activity, GDP is indispensable in short-run macroeconomic analysis and management, but it is wholly unsuitable for appraising investment projects and identifying sustainable development," he said.

Responding to the report, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said the coming year is "critical" in efforts to stop and reverse declining biodiversity.

He said that the U.K., which is this year president of the Group of Seven leading economies and hosting the 26th global U.N. Climate Change Conference of the Parties, is "going to make sure the natural world stays right at the top of the global agenda."

Countries are also due to meet in China later this year to agree new efforts to tackle biodiversity declines. In a foreword to the report, naturalist and broadcaster David Attenborough said economics was a discipline that shapes decisions of the "utmost consequence" and the review put biodiversity at its core. □

Kurds and government end rival sieges in northern Syria

BEIRUT (AP) — Kurdish forces in northern Syria ended a weekslong siege of government-held neighborhoods in two northeastern cities Tuesday, they said, as part of a deal brokered by Russia.

As part of the agreement with Kurdish forces, Syr-

ian government troops allowed supplies to enter Kurdish-held areas in the northern province of Aleppo, an opposition activist group reported.

The deal to end the sieges by government forces and Kurdish fighters in different parts of the war-torn coun-

try's north came two days after Kurdish fighters shot one person dead during a pro-government protest. The deal was brokered by Russia, an opposition war monitor said.

Local Kurdish police said in a statement they would end the siege on government-held parts of the provincial capital of Hassakeh province that carries the same name as well as the city of Qamishli along the border with Turkey.

Areas held by the government in Hassakeh and Qamishli are known as the security square. State institutions still function in the areas despite the fact the U.S.-backed Kurdish-led fighters control much of the region.

The Kurds, Syria's largest ethnic minority, have carved out a semi-autonomous enclave in Syria's

north after the start of the civil war in 2011. In the area, the Kurds run their own affairs and control most of the country's oil resources.

In both Hassakeh and Qamishli cities, they share control with government forces, which have a presence in security zones, near the airport and in some neighborhoods. Both cities have a sizeable Kurdish population.

"We at the Internal Security Forces are committed to the unity of Syrian blood," the local Kurdish police force said, blaming government forces for tension in the cities. On Sunday, Kurdish forces shot dead a pro-government protester in Hassakeh during a demonstration against the siege.

The police force said life returned to normal on

Tuesday with the siege lifted and material will be allowed to flow into government-held areas. During the siege that lasted several weeks, Kurdish fighters prevented the flow of flour and fuel into government-held areas.

In Aleppo province, government forces allowed food and fuel to enter Kurdish held areas for the first time in weeks as part of a Russian-brokered deal, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition war monitor, said.

There was no comment from the government. Tensions are not uncommon between the two sides in northern Syria and Kurdish officials have said their moves are in retaliation for a government siege on Kurdish areas in the northern province of Aleppo. □



In this photo released by the Syrian official news agency SANA, pro-government demonstrators protest the siege on their neighborhood by Kurdish security forces, in Hassakeh, Syria, Sunday, Jan. 31, 2021.

Associated Press

Israel's Labor party looks to new leader for revival

By TIA GOLDENBERG

Associated Press

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) — Last week, Israel's Labor party appeared headed for extinction, with polls indicating it wouldn't win enough votes in upcoming elections to enter parliament. But following the election of progressive lawmaker Merav Michaeli as its new leader, the party is showing signs of life.

Labor, home of the country's founding leaders and for decades its ruling party, has begun to climb in opinion polls, and Michaeli is determined to once again make it a major force in Israeli politics.

Michaeli, a firebrand feminist, promotes a message that has rarely been heard in Israeli politics in recent years. She seeks social justice, equality for all Israelis and peace with the Palestinians. Yet she also won't rule out sitting in a coalition with right-wing parties, likely hindering her agenda, if that realizes the shared goal of ousting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "You can disagree with me ideologically but what is clear is that I am here and I fight for equality and peace," Michaeli told The Associated Press in a telephone interview. "I believe that Labor is not dead, it is



New Labor party leader Merav Michaeli gives a press conference in Tel Aviv, Israel, Monday, Feb. 1, 2021.

essential for Israel's future." Her election appears to have given Labor a jolt of momentum. But with many traditional voters having left the party, she has her work cut out for her ahead of March elections. Israel's center-left camp is fractured and right-wing parties, led by Netanyahu's Likud, remain dominant. Opinion polls in recent days have projected that Labor under Michaeli will win five seats in Israel's 120-seat Knesset.

That could jump in the

coming days if, as expected, smaller parties with little chance of making it into parliament withdraw from the race ahead of a Thursday deadline. Although the projections are far below Labor's glory days, even a modest showing could make Michaeli a kingmaker in a coalition of midsize parties opposed to Netanyahu.

Labor guided Israel to independence in 1948 and led the country for its first three decades, embedding social democratic values

most evident today in its universal health care, especially amid the pandemic. Although it led Israel during the 1967 Mideast war and built the first settlements in the occupied West Bank, Labor later signed the landmark Oslo peace accords with the Palestinians and today favors a two-state solution with the Palestinians.

Yet it has struggled to remain relevant over the past two decades as peacemaking with the Palestinians ground to a halt, other

Associated Press

options in the center-left emerged and much of the electorate appears to have embraced Netanyahu's hard-line ideology.

Michaeli took over Labor after a trying year when it entered parliament with historically low support.

The party was torn apart after its former leader joined Netanyahu's government despite pledges not to, driving away lifelong voters. Michaeli chose to remain in the opposition and says she will never sit in a coalition under Netanyahu for a slew of reasons, among them his three corruption indictments.

She shuns marriage, although she is in a long-term relationship with a popular late-night TV host, and says she has never wanted children in a society sprung from the biblical commandment to procreate. She is known for her signature all black looks, which she has said are meant to downplay her body and sexuality.

When she withdrew to the opposition, she promised: "We won't let the Labor party die."

Now at the helm, she will be tested on whether she can fulfill that pledge and stabilize a party that has had six leaders since Netanyahu took power in 2009. □

Hip-hop T-shirt sets off more tensions in China-Canada ties

BEIJING (AP) — China says it has lodged a formal complaint with Canada over T-shirts ordered by one of the country's Beijing Embassy staff that allegedly mocked China's response to the coronavirus outbreak, in an apparent mix-up between the city of Wuhan and the hip-hop group Wu-Tang Clan.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin told reporters Tuesday that China called on Canada to "thoroughly investigate the incident and give China a clear explanation."

The incident arose after a T-shirt maker posted on the Chinese internet that

a staff member from the Canadian Embassy had ordered T-shirts with a bat print. That appeared to reference allegations that the virus developed in China from bats and then spread to humans in the city of Wuhan, where infections were first reported in late 2019. But Canadian media reports said the logo was a W in homage to the New York hip-hop group the Wu-Tang Clan and that Ottawa had apologized for any misunderstanding.

China's government is extremely sensitive to accusations it was the source of the pandemic and failed to respond quickly enough

when cases were first reported in Wuhan. The T-shirts were reportedly ordered last summer and it wasn't clear if any were still in circulation.

The controversy underscores the plunge in relations between the countries in the past two years over China's demand that Canada release a top executive of communications giant Huawei who is wanted on fraud charges in the United States.

Meng Wanzhou, who is also the daughter of the company's founder, denies the charges. China says her case is politically motivated as part of a U.S.

effort to stifle the nation's global economic expansion. Her lawyers argue

she has been subjected to abuse of process and should be freed. □



In this Nov. 12, 2018, file photo, flags of Canada and China are placed for the first China-Canada economic and financial strategy dialogue in Beijing, China.

Associated Press

Guatemalan fights hunger with book-for-food barters by bike

By GIOVANNA DELL'ORTO

Associated Press

Bonifaz Díaz biked through the sprawling city of Quetzaltenango, 7,640 feet (2,330 meters) above sea level among Guatemala's volcanoes, to deliver a sociology book to the home of a local teacher. He pedaled away with four brightly colored bags of Incaparina, a popular cereal mix crucial in fighting child hunger.

The coronavirus has worsened child malnutrition in Guatemala, which already suffered from the worst rate of it in the Western Hemisphere. Since the pandemic hit, Díaz has cycled more than 1,200 miles (2,000 kilometers) with his saddlebags filled with donated books, and lugged back thousands of pounds of the oatmeal-like food for a local NGO that feeds nearly 400 kids.

People pick a book they want from a list of donated titles, and in return give several bags of Incaparina. By bringing the books-for-food barter program directly to people's homes, the 44-year-old is ensuring that donations keep flowing to fight the hunger crisis as many people stay home as much as possible to avoid catching or spreading the virus.

"People want to provide support, but ... the 'stay-



Ana Castillo trades 4 pounds of a cereal mix for a sociology book delivered by Bonifaz Diaz in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, Saturday, Jan. 30, 2021.

Associated Press

at-home' has gotten very strong," said Díaz, an actor by profession and avid cyclist. "People get motivated if I go to their home with my bike."

He sometimes tows a small cart to be able to carry as much as 125 pounds (57 kilograms) and has gone as far as 37 miles (60 kilometers) for a delivery to a nearby town in the highlands, where many roads are gutted with potholes.

A 1 pound bag of Incaparina, which provides 24 servings, costs just 9 quetzales (\$1.15). But that's well out of reach for the fami-

lies that are served by the nonprofit 32 Volcanoes, co-founder Dr. Carmen Benítez said, with 97% of those households scraping by on less than that per day in income. Nearly half the population of Guatemala's Western Highlands, a majority-indigenous region, suffers from chronic malnutrition, according to the World Bank, and Incaparina is a lifesaver for many families.

On visits to rural homes that get help from 32 Volcanoes' nutrition programs, Benítez often sees little food on the shelves other than a

bright red Incaparina bag, some salt and corn for tamales — or cheap, processed foods that do nothing to prevent stunting and increase diabetes, as well as learning and behavioral disabilities.

With the number of kids her association helps skyrocketing from 120 to 382 during the pandemic, "the bartering is food security," Benítez said. "The idea is that before age 5, children won't already be chronically malnourished."

And the initiative is having an impact.

"Seeing that the children

are less scared, that they play more ... that is where we can get results," she said.

Nearly a year into the books-for-food program, two more cyclists have joined Díaz. Donations are pouring in, from books and artwork for bartering to different kinds of nutrient-rich foods like amaranth grain.

Ana Castillo, the 29-year-old high school teacher who last weekend received the sociology book, "Liquid Love," a study on modern relationships, is a regular donor. The 4 pounds (1.8 kilograms) of Incaparina she provided in return will help a highlands family eat for a month.

Castillo delights in choosing her books from the titles Díaz posts on social media, and she loves the feeling of a "growing circle" of giving and receiving.

"You might not get to those places, but your help can," she said.

"This small grain of sand to be able to change this country."

For his part, Díaz plans to continue cycling against hunger as long as it's needed, even as he's struggling economically as well since the theater company he co-founded has been shuttered since last spring.

"It's an opportunity to serve in which we all benefit," he said. □

Haiti leader speaks of more power for diaspora amid strife

By EVENS SANON

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti

(AP) — Haitian President Jovenel Moïse said Monday that proposed constitutional amendments would allow members of the country's diaspora to run for the presidency and other high-ranking offices. The announcement came during an online public address during which Moïse reiterated that he would not step down until February 2022 and urged Haitians to support the creation of a new constitution, which is due to be

voted upon in April.

"It's time to change it," he said. "We can't continue like this. The country is paralyzed."

Moïse spoke on the first day of a two-day transportation strike that paralyzed parts of Haiti and forced the closure of banks, schools and businesses. Haiti also has been hit by ongoing, often violent protests in recent years against corruption and for better living conditions. The proposed constitutional changes are expected to be made public this week as opposition lead-

ers step up their demands that Moïse relinquish power on Sunday, arguing that his five-year term began when that of former President Michel Martelly expired in February 2016. However, a chaotic election process led to the appointment of a provisional president for a year until Moïse was sworn in a year later. Moïse also pledged to keep fighting a rise in kidnapping, saying he won't allow gang members to scare people into not participating in the upcoming constitutional referendum or the general

elections scheduled for later this year. □



A woman pushes her merchandise away from tires set fire by protesters during a countrywide strike demanding the resignation of Haitian President Jovenel Moïse in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Monday, Feb. 1, 2021.

Associated Press

LOCAL



EAGLE BEACH — While operating two successful restaurants at Paradise Beach Villas- Eagle Beach, The Kitchen Table (TKT) and Asi es mi Peru (AEMP) who are both under one roof, COVID-19 interrupted operations of both restaurants and each and every restaurant in Aruba in March this year. TKT was closed temporarily, AEMP kept operating for take out in the weekends, operating lunch and dinner again in the weekends until fully operational in July.

It became clear says owner Roxanna Salinas, "that we would not be able to maintain all of the staff with hotel occupancies of around twenty percent once the tourists



Asi es mi Peru launches quality Food Truck at Eagle Beach

started returning slowly in August." But we saw it as an obligation to maintain all of our staff as one family! And that's when the idea of extending our services with a food truck was born so we could make sure to keep all of our staff who otherwise would be out of a job. A perfect food truck with all whistles and bells appeared on the horizon and with permits filed the food truck made her appearance at Eagle Beach at the end of September. Just, 100 yards from the restaurant at the corner of the T-crossing between Paradise Beach Villas and La Cabana. Convenient to offer a large scale of products!

Best ceviche and grilled chicken on the island

Our now famous ceviche, insiders say the best ceviche on the island, is a best seller and our roasted chicken (pollo a la brasa) are favorite items but hotdogs, hamburgers, salads, soups and wraps, empanadas and pastechis are just a few of the items offered. Actually, there are no restrictions as the entire Asi es mi Peru menu is available converted from dollars to florins. While most food trucks in Aruba operate in the evening and night the AEMP Food Truck operates from 11.00 am – 9 pm. Every day with the exception of Monday, orders can be called in at +297 592-5699 and picked up at the food truck.

Mi Retiro (My Retirement)

"When I married Roxanna says co-operator Jan van Nes, I knew that the word retirement was not in her vocabulary. Now, a retired hotelier for two years, I know that somewhere down the road there will always be something to do, even when our two restaurants would be operated by a younger generation. With this perspective the Food Truck could be called "Mi Retiro (My Retirement)."

For reservations for The Kitchen Table (www.thekitchen-tableinaruba.com), Asi es Mi Peru (www.asiesperuena-ruba.com) and take-out orders, feel free to call Roxanna at +297 592-5699. We love to welcome you! □

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Shalom Body & Soul Spa

Coming Soon: The Brownstone Ribs & Seafood



World Wetland Day

SANTA CRUZ— Each year on the 2nd of February, the international community celebrates World Wetlands - a day to put a spotlight on the state of our wetlands globally. Organized by the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the 2021 theme focuses on the intrinsic link between wetlands and freshwater, highlighting the role wetlands play in the quantity and quality of freshwater on our planet.

With a world population projected to reach 10

billion by 2050, we will require 55% more water. While this quantity is enormous, the quality of freshwater requires urgent attention as well. Many water sources are polluted due to chemicals, plastic waste, or untreated wastewater, leaving 2.2 billion people drinking unsafe water. Wetlands can play a vital role in supporting the efforts towards more and safe freshwater and in reaching Sustainable Development Goal 6: 'Ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all'.

As the world painfully realizes throughout the COVID19 pandemic, access to safe water and soap for handwashing can help stave off disease and keep our economies functioning. To actually 'Build Back Better' we must recognize and include the vital need to provide clean water and protect the natural systems that provide it, such as wetlands. Wetlands are a source of life! □

Source: Aruba National Park

Foundation Ajudo Na Aruba (FANA): Volunteers reach out to feed the Arubans in need

ORANJESTAD — In an interview with the Dutch Annelot Muijres, founder of the official Foundation Ajudo Na Aruba (FANA) meaning helping Aruba, Aruba Today heard about the growing poverty of the local people due to the COVID-19 crisis and the financial situation on the island. "We feed 12.000 mouths per month, the requests for help are skyrocketing while the donations are falling behind.

The 12.000 mouths per month come from 400 to 450 families per week which are provided with week packages by FANA, Muijres says. "We have families between two and nine persons so all different. Notable is the baby boom right now, approximately nine months after carnival. We have many newborns which costs a lot of money and many young mothers cannot provide. FANA offers breast feeding assistance, baby formula and pampers and therefore we need donations really bad." She also notices that

most of the Aruban registered are now out of their saving money and still are unemployed plus without the financial support of the government. Many also inform her that the official food bank and the Red Cross are full so are unable to register them and they consequently turn to FANA. "Our requests for registrations rise while our donations are decreasing. Ajudo na Aruba is run completely by donations, whether it's food or money (to buy food), diapers, formula or even toys and clothing, every single item donated is valuable to them. If you would like to join this good cause and support Aruba, feel free to donate or contact the organization if you require more information. ALL of the donations are used to help families in need.

Powered by volunteers

"We are doing this all with love and the help of our fantastic volunteers. We thank you all from the bottom of our hearts. The Arubahuis, the official representative of Aruba in the

tremendous effort of them as they -together with our fantastic donors - make this foundation a success." The volunteers work long days and take precious time away from their families to help Ajudo na Aruba reach out, Muijres says. If you would like to join their fantastic team, please contact the organization through the contact page on their website <https://www.ajudonaaruba.com/contact> and they will reach out to you.

Refugees

FANA collaborates with HIAS, a Jewish American nonprofit organization that provides humanitarian aid and assistance to refugees. Muijres informed Aruba Today before that she estimates there are between 25.000 and 30.000 illegals on the island. The total (legal) population of Aruba is about 106.000 inhabitants. "These refugees have no medical insurance, no jobs and are in immediate need of food and baby milk." The Arubahuis, the official representative of Aruba in the



Netherlands, recently announced to support FANA by advertising online how to donate to the foundation.

Muijres started this initiative by preparing home-cooked meals from her home, but she soon realized this was not enough. The grassroots organization became an official foundation with president Annelot Muijres, secretary Lizzy Jansen and treasurer Xander Muijres. They help all people in need, not only by providing meals or groceries, but also support in ba-

sic necessities like diapers, baby formula, soap etc. Have a look at Aruba Today's video about the foundation on our Facebook page and website: Corona Street Talk – Ajudo na Aruba <https://www.facebook.com/arubatoday/videos/2315084928799246/>.

FANA

Av. Milio Croes 70
Oranjestad, Aruba
Facebook: FANA Fundacion Ajudo na Aruba, Website: <https://www.ajudonaaruba.com> □

Frequently asked questions- Covid testing

ORANJESTAD — Aruba's health and safety protocols are being revisited and reevaluated on an ongoing basis. Based on the ever-changing situation, we recommend all visitors to check Aruba.com frequently for any changes to dates, markets, required procedures and more.

If taking the PCR test in Aruba, are we quarantined to our room in the hotel or just the hotel? Can we still go to facilities in the hotel such as the beach and pool?

If your test was administered on the island upon arrival, you are required to quarantine in your room at your booked accommodation until you receive your test result. The quarantine will be up to 24 hours and the Aruba Department of Health will make every effort to have results in 6-8 hours, in order to minimize visitors' time in quarantine. Visitors are required to stay in their rooms to ensure the safety of fellow guests and Arubans.

If I tested positive while in Aruba, do I need to test negative before I can return to my country?

Yes. If you test positive, you must remain in isolation until declared recovered.

Do children need to be tested as well?

Children 14 and under are not required to take or submit a PCR test.

Why is Aruba requesting that travelers upload a certified negative PCR test result within 72 to 12 hours of traveling to the island?

We are requiring a negative test to minimize the chances of an individual contracting the virus ahead of travel to Aruba. This is for the safety of Aruba's visitors and local community. Any Covid-19 testing done prior to travel to Aruba must show a certified negative test result conducted within 3 days of your departure flight to Aruba (the last leg of your trip). The negative test results must then be uploaded as part of the ED card process no later than 12 hours prior to your departing flight to Aruba (the last leg of your trip).

Can COVID-19 antibody test results be used as a replacement for a PCR test?

An antibody test cannot be used as a replacement for a PCR test, as antibody tests do not reflect whether a person is currently infected with COVID-19.

Testing before your return flight

Some countries/states/cities require returning travelers to undergo mandatory quarantine or present a negative COVID-19 test upon arrival. There are currently 3 clinics that perform COVID-19 tests for departing travelers:

MedCare Clinic: medcare.aw - (+297) 280-0630 - WhatsApp (+297) 562-4440 - info@medcare.aw

MedLab: lab.aw - (+297) 586-1600 - Cell/WhatsApp (+297) 597-5544 - info@lab.aw

Horacio Oduber Hospital: (US\$ 75) <https://www.arubahospital.com/> - servicecenter@hoharuba.com - (+297) 597-4522 (Call or WhatsApp)

Get in contact with the test provider to make an appointment, get details on the exact test performed and their procedures.

Tests that are accepted:

Accepted Molecular test types:

- PCR / RT-PCR / ddPCR / Rapid PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction)
- NAA / NAAT (Nucleic Acid Amplification)
- AMP PRB (Amplified Probe)
- LAMP (Loop-mediated Isothermal Amplification)
- TMA (Transcription-mediated Amplification)
- Accepted Molecular test brands, such as, but not limited to: Abbott ID NOW - Only when results include the original thermal receipt / sticker, or results are verifiable through an email or patient portal.
- Quidel Lyra PCR
- Abbott Realtime PCR
- Cobas Qualitative PCR
- FTD PCR
- Xpert Xpress
- Simplexa Direct PCR
- Vault Health

Upload any of these, or an inauthentic test result, and you will be required to retake the PCR test on arrival at the Aruba airport at your expense.

Additional important safety measures & updates

The government of Aruba has also implemented additional island-wide measures to further maintain the health and safety of visitors. As with all of Aruba's procedures and protocols, this will be monitored and is subject to change as the situation develops.

From January 7th 2021 until further notice the following will be in effect:

- Curfew starting at 11:00 pm until 5:00 am.
- In addition to the curfew, there are "restricted zones" that are off-limits between the hours of 7pm-5am. Restricted zones include all beaches and public parking lots.
- All establishments are currently required to close by 10:00 pm at the latest.
- This is not applicable for establishments at hotel properties, however is applicable for hotel Casinos.
- Closing times per hotel may differ, please check with your hotel for more information.
- Tables at restaurants can have a maximum of four seats indoor and outdoor (excluding children under the age of 12). Tables must be at least 1.5 m apart.
- All bars, rum shops, and nightclubs are closed until further notice. Restaurant bars can serve at tables only. There will be no bar stools and no standing at bars.
- Hotel bars can serve at the bar for only registered hotel guests.

For more information go to www.aruba.com and click on health requirements.□

Tests that are NOT accepted:

- Any at-home kits (the sample needs to be collected by licensed medical staff) With the exception of Vault Health
- Any test that does not rely on a nasal swab, such as: Sputum, saliva and spit collection (spit in a cup, etc) Gargle, oral rinse, etc Oral swab without a nasal swab With the exception of Vault Health
- All Antigen (Ag) tests (including Quidel Sophia, Abbott BinaxNOW and Rapid Antigen Tests)
- All Antibody tests (such as IgG, IgA, IgM and Rapid Antibody Tests)
- All blood tests (such as fingerstick, venipuncture)
- All plasma tests
- All serum tests
- All lateral flow tests
- All fever checks
- All temperature checks
- Any Doctor's note



Big Tech leads stocks to broad gains; GameStop, AMC tank

By DAMIAN J. TROISE and
ALEX VEIGA
AP Business Writers

Big Tech companies and banks helped power a broad rally on Wall Street Tuesday, though shares in GameStop and other recent high-flying stocks hyped by online traders plunged.

The S&P 500 rose 1.4%, extending gains from a day earlier, as investors sized up the latest batch of company earnings reports. Rising crude oil prices and solid earnings results helped lift energy companies, including Exxon Mobil and Marathon Petroleum. Treasury yields rose and the VIX, a measure of fear in the market, fell sharply, a sign volatility was easing.

The wave of buying coincided with a skid in GameStop and AMC Entertainment, stocks that have been caught up in a speculative frenzy by traders in online forums and on social media who seek to inflict damage on Wall Street hedge funds that have bet these stocks would fall. The price of silver, which spiked 9% Monday, fueling speculation the precious metal was also being hyped up by online traders, sank by more than 10%.

"Certainly, there's been some profit-taking in these names," said Ross Mayfield, investment strategist



In this photo provided by the New York Stock Exchange, specialist Meric Greenbaum works at a post on the floor, Tuesday Feb. 2, 2021.

Associated Press

at Baird. "You saw with silver, there was an attempt to try a similar cornering of the market, and that didn't even last two days."

The S&P 500 index rose 52.45 points to 3,826.31. The Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 475.57 points, or 1.6%, to 30,687.48. The tech-heavy Nasdaq composite climbed 209.38 points, or 1.6%, to 13,612.78. The Russell 200 index of smaller companies also rose, adding 25.28 points, or 1.2%, to 2,151.44. The major indexes remain near their all-time highs set last month.

Treasury yields rose in an-

other sign of investor confidence. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note rose to 1.10% from 1.06% late Monday.

GameStop plunged 60% to \$90 a share, and AMC Entertainment lost 41.2% to \$7.82 a share. Both companies have been in the spotlight for more than two weeks as an online community of investors pushed the stocks to astronomical levels. Trading in those and several other stocks have been restricted by the popular online trading platform Robinhood since last week

following the bouts of extreme volatility. Robinhood needed to secure funding in order to meet deposit thresholds required by organizations that handle the trading orders placed by investors on its platform. Robinhood eased some of the trading limits on GameStop and select other stocks Tuesday. For example, it now allows users to buy up to 100 shares and options contracts in GameStop and 1,250 in AMC. On Monday, the brokerage was limiting users to 5 shares in GameStop and 75 in AMC. An online army of traders

using the online site Reddit banded together for the past two weeks to snap up shares of GameStop, AMC and other struggling chains, stocks that have been heavily shorted (bets that the stock will fall) by a number of hedge funds. In the process, they've done heavy damage to those hedge funds in a stunning reversal of financial power on Wall Street.

But it's not clear how much longer the Reddit traders can hold the line. Intense media and Wall Street interest pushed many traders into these stocks late last week, with GameStop going as high as \$483 last Thursday. They began trading this year at just over \$17 a share. The huge run-up in the stock price appears to have little to do with the future prospects of the mall-based retailer, which has been losing money consistently. While a lot of people seem to be holding a line on some of these positions, the broader market is not showing many signs of strain because of it, said Darrell Cronk, chief investment officer of Wells Fargo Wealth and Investment Management.

"I hope the markets are moving away from some of the issues it dealt with last week and focusing on more of the true fundamentals," Cronk said. □

FTC says Amazon took \$62 million in tips from drivers

By JOSEPH PISANI
AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Amazon is paying nearly \$62 million to settle charges that it took tips from its delivery drivers. The Federal Trade Commission said Tuesday that Amazon didn't pass on tips to drivers for more than two years, even though it promised shoppers and drivers it would do so.

The FTC said Amazon didn't stop taking the tips until 2019, when the company found out about the FTC's investigation.

"This theft did not go unnoticed by Amazon's drivers, many of whom expressed anger and confusion to the

company," said FTC Commissioner Rohit Chopra in a statement. "But, rather than coming clean, Amazon took elaborate steps to mislead its drivers and conceal its theft, sending them canned responses that repeated the company's lies."

The drivers were part of Amazon's Flex business, which was founded in 2015 and allows people to deliver Amazon packages with their own cars. The drivers are independent workers, and are not Amazon employees.

The FTC said Amazon at first promised workers that they would be paid \$18 to \$25

per hour. It also told them they would receive 100% of tips given to them by customers on the app.

But in 2016, Amazon started paying drivers a lower hourly rate and used the tips to make up the difference, according to the complaint.

Amazon didn't disclose the change to drivers, the FTC said, and the tips it took from drivers amounted to \$61.7 million.

Seattle-based Amazon.com Inc. said in a statement that the way it reported pay to workers was clear. But the company said it "added additional clarity in 2019" and is "pleased to put



In this Oct. 1, 2020 file photo, an Amazon Prime logo appears on the side of a delivery van as it departs an Amazon Warehouse location in Dedham, Mass.

Associated Press

this matter behind us." The FTC said the money Amazon is paying for the

settlement will go back to delivery drivers whose tips were taken. □

U.S. billionaire buys SpaceX flight to orbit with 3 others

By MARCIA DUNN

AP Aerospace

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.

(AP) — A U.S. billionaire who made a fortune in tech and fighter jets is buying an entire SpaceX flight and plans to take three "everyday" people with him to circle the globe this year.

Besides fulfilling his dream of flying in space, Jared Isaacman announced Monday that he aims to use the private trip to raise \$200 million for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, half coming from his own pockets.

A female health care worker for St. Jude already has been selected for the mission. Anyone donating to St. Jude in February will be entered into a random drawing for seat No. 3. The fourth seat will go to a business owner who uses Shift4 Payments, Isaacman's credit card processing company in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

"I truly want us to live in a world 50 or 100 years from now where people are jumping in their rockets like the Jetsons and there are families bouncing around on the moon with their kid in a spacesuit," Isaacman, who turns 38 next week, told The Associated Press.



In this undated image provided St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Jared Isaacman pauses while speaking about his enthusiasm for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and his spaceflight called Inspiration4, in Memphis, Tenn.

"I also think if we are going to live in that world, we better conquer childhood cancer along the way."

He's bought a Super Bowl ad to publicize the mission, dubbed Inspiration4 and targeted for an October launch from Florida. The other passengers aboard the SpaceX Dragon capsule — what Isaacman calls a diverse group "from everyday walks of life" — will be announced next month. SpaceX founder and chief executive Elon Musk expects the flight to last two to four days.

Isaacman's trip is the latest

deal announced for private space travel — and it's No. 1 on the runway for an orbital trip.

"This is an important milestone toward enabling access to space for everyone," Musk said during a press conference Monday from SpaceX headquarters in Hawthorne, California. While expensive, these initial private flights will drive down costs over time, he noted.

Last week, a Houston company revealed the names of three businessmen who are paying \$55 million apiece to fly to the Interna-

tional Space Station next January aboard a SpaceX Dragon. And a Japanese businessman has a deal with SpaceX to fly to the moon. In the past, space tourists had to hitch rides to the space station on Russian rockets.

Isaacman would not divulge how much he's paying SpaceX, except to say that the anticipated donation to St. Jude "vastly exceeds the cost of the mission."

While a former NASA astronaut will accompany the three businessmen, Isaacman will serve as his own

Associated Press

spacecraft commander. The appeal, he said, is learning all about SpaceX's Dragon and Falcon 9 rocket. The capsules are designed to fly autonomously, but a pilot can override the system in an emergency.

A "space geek" since kindergarten, Isaacman dropped out of high school when he was 16, got a GED certificate and started a business in his parents' basement that became the genesis for Shift4. He set a speed record flying around the world in 2009 while raising money for the Make-A-Wish program, and later established Draken International, the world's largest private fleet of fighter jets.

Isaacman's \$100 million commitment to St. Jude in Memphis, Tennessee, is the largest ever by a single individual and one of the largest overall.

"We're pinching ourselves every single day," said Rick Shadyac, president of St. Jude's fundraising organization.

Besides SpaceX training, Isaacman intends to take his crew on a mountain expedition to mimic his most uncomfortable experience so far — tenting on the side of a mountain in bitter winter conditions. □

Spacewalkers complete 4 years of power upgrades for station

By MARCIA DUNN

AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.

(AP) — A pair of space-walking astronauts completed a four-year effort to modernize the International Space Station's power grid on Monday, installing one last battery.

Over the weekend, flight controllers in Houston used the space station's big ro-

bot arm to replace the last pair of old-style batteries with a single better-quality one. NASA's Mike Hopkins and Victor Glover put the finishing touches on this newest lithium-ion battery to complete a series of spacewalks that began in 2017.

Although the spacewalk got started late, Hopkins and Glover hustled through



In this image taken from NASA video, NASA astronauts Mike Hopkins, left, and Victor Glover work outside the International Space Station on Monday, Feb. 1, 2021.

Associated Press

the battery work in under an hour. They also made quick work of camera installations and squeezed in some extra chores.

The astronauts gazed down at Earth and soaked in one last sunset before reenter-

ing the space station. "Yeah, enjoy the view. You guys did a great job today. You guys rocked it," Mission Control said as the five-hour spacewalk concluded well ahead of schedule.

The space station is now

equipped with 24 lithium-ion batteries to store power collected by the solar panels. The big, boxy batteries, surpassing 400 pounds (180 kilograms) each, provide electricity for the orbiting lab when it's on the night side of Earth. They're so powerful that only half as many are needed as the old nickel-hydrogen batteries they replaced.

The upgrade took longer than expected after one of the new batteries failed after it was installed two years ago and had to be replaced. In all, 14 spacewalks were needed to complete the battery work. NASA expects these batteries to last the rest of the space station's operating life. □

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Dolly Parton on Super Bowl commercial and COVID-19 vaccine

By MESFIN FEKADU

AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Dolly Parton has been singing about everyday office employees working "9 to 5" for over 40 years, but now the country icon is singing about entrepreneurs working "5 to 9" to pursue their dreams after hours. The Grammy-winning legend's 1980s hit has been flipped by Squarespace — a company that helps users build and host their own websites — for a Super Bowl commercial debuting Tuesday. Oscar winner Damien Chazelle of "La La Land" fame directed the spot.

"A lot of people through the years have wanted to change the lyrics to fit certain things they're doing. I really thought that was a wonderful thing, especially for Squarespace. They're so into people, new entrepreneurs working after hours to start their own businesses," Parton said. "'5 to 9' seemed to be a perfect thing when they pitched it."

The singer, who is also an actor, producer, humanitarian and more, said she can relate to businesspeople working around the clock to fulfill their goals. In an interview with The Associated Press, Parton talked about flipping "9 to 5," being a part of this year's Super Bowl, donating \$1 million to coronavirus research and remembering her brother Randy Parton, who died last month. An-



Dolly Parton performs in concert on May 27, 2014, in Knoxville, Tenn.

swers have been edited for length and clarity.

AP: Are you excited to be part of this year's Super Bowl?

Parton: I've been asked several times to be part of that. It's always such a big commitment. I've always kind of chickened out. I know it's just a big commitment. If you do good, you do great. If you do bad, you do bad in front of all those people. This seemed like the perfect kind of way to do it.

AP: What was it like writing "9 to 5" over 40 years ago?

Parton: That song just stays so true to people that get out — you get up in the morning, you wobble into the kitchen, you pour your coffee, you try to get your

butt going, you try to get up and get to work knowing that you've got to do it. I'm really happy. This is the 40th anniversary of "9 to 5" since the movie came out. We're celebrating, so this could not have happened at a better time.

AP: You donated \$1 million to coronavirus research — what compelled you to do that?

Parton: Well, I follow my heart. I'm a person of faith and I pray all the time that God will lead me into the right direction and let me know what to do. When the pandemic first hit, that was my first thought, "I need to do something to try to help find a vaccination." I just did some research with the people at Vanderbilt (Uni-

versity) they're wonderful people, they've been so good through the years to my people in times of illness and all that. I just asked if I could donate a million dollars to the research for a vaccine.

I get a lot more credit than I deserve I think, but I was just happy to be a part of any and all of that.

AP: Have you gotten your shot?

Parton: No. I'm not going to get mine until some more people get theirs. I don't want it to look like I'm jumping the line just because I donated money. I'm very funny about that. I'm going to get mine though, but I'm going to wait. I'm at the age where I could have gotten mine legally last

Associated Press

week. I turned 75. I was going to do it on my birthday, and I thought, "Nah, don't do that." You'll look like you're just doing a show. None of my work is really like that. I wasn't doing it for a show. I'm going to get mine. I want it. I'm going to get it. When I get it, I'll probably do it on camera so people will know and I'll tell them the truth, if I have symptoms and all that. Hopefully it'll encourage people. I'm not going to jump the line just because I could.

AP: How does it feel to be 75?

Parton: Well I plan to be around a lot longer. I don't have no plans of slowing down because the number says I should. I don't pay attention to that. I wake up with new dreams every day.

I try to make the most of every year that I've lived. I've been doing that since I was little. I'll be doing it until I keel over. Hopefully that won't be anytime soon.

AP: Your brother Randy recently died from cancer. How are you holding up?

Parton: Well, we're heartbroken. We loved him so much. He fought really hard for the last year. Randy was a wonderful artist, entertainer. He was very dear to me. He was one of my younger brothers. I lost my baby brother last year, around the same time of the year. This was really a double whammy for all of us. □

Music helping Tony Bennett battle Alzheimer's disease



Singer Tony Bennett performs at the Statue of Liberty Museum opening celebration in New York on May 15, 2019.

Associated Press

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Tony Bennett has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease but it hasn't quieted his legendary voice.

The singer's wife and son reveal in the latest edition of AARP The Magazine that Bennett was first diagnosed with the irreversible neurological disorder in 2016. The magazine says he endures "increasingly rarer moments of clarity and awareness."

Still, he continues to rehearse and twice a week

goes through his 90-minute set with his longtime pianist, Lee Musiker.

The magazine says he sings with perfect pitch and apparent ease.

A beloved interpreter of American standards, Bennett's chart-topping career spans seven decades. Bennett, 94, gained his first pop success in the early 1950s and enjoyed a career revival in the 1990s and became popular with younger audiences in part because of an appearance on "MTV Unplugged." He

continued recording and touring constantly, and his 2014 collaboration with Lady Gaga, "Tony Bennett & Lady Gaga: Cheek to Cheek," debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard charts. □

1	2	6	5	7	8	4	9	3
8	7	9	3	4	2	1	6	5
5	3	4	6	1	9	7	2	8
9	5	2	4	8	6	3	7	1
6	8	3	7	2	1	5	4	9
4	1	7	9	3	5	6	8	2
2	6	1	8	5	7	9	3	4
3	9	8	1	6	4	2	5	7
7	4	5	2	9	3	8	1	6

Difficulty Level ★★★

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Reed's reputation from Bahamas the ultimate penalty

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

The violation was so egregious that Rickie Fowler, glancing at the replay on television, quickly raised his eyebrows and said: "Whoa! What was THAT?"

It was Patrick Reed.

This was just over a year ago in the Bahamas, the day Reed infamously used the back of his wedge to scoop away sand — twice — from behind his golf ball in a waste bunker, improving his line of play. Only when he was shown video evidence did Reed accept the two-shot penalty, but not before suggesting the camera angle made it look worse than it was.

The penalty, as it turns out, was worth more than two shots.

There is no greater punishment in golf than being stuck with a reputation for cheating.

Reed was always going to have a hard time living down that incident.

It followed him to Australia, where the fans were so abusive his caddie got into it with a spectator and was replaced for the final day of the Presidents Cup. It stayed with him in the chill environment of Kapalua, where a spectator yelled "CHEATER!" after Reed hit a putt in a playoff. A few weeks later in San Diego, Reed asked police to remove hecklers.

The verbal abuse was silenced by golf not having fans because of the pandemic.

And then more outrage involving Reed, fueled mightily by social media, arrived



Patrick Reed stands on the South Course while holding his trophy for winning the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament at Torrey Pines, Sunday, Jan. 31, 2021, in San Diego.

Associated Press

during an otherwise idyllic Saturday afternoon at Torrey Pines.

Moving past this one will be almost impossible.

As far as the PGA Tour is concerned, Reed did nothing wrong on the 10th hole of the third round at the Farmers Insurance Open. And according to the Rules of Golf, which relies on facts over reputation, the tour was right.

"He operated the way the rules permit him to operate," said John Mutch, the tour's senior tournament director.

This was about optics. Mostly, it was about Reed.

He pulled his approach from a fairway bunker into thick grass left of the 10th green. Approaching where a volunteer had marked the spot with a tiny flag, Reed asked if the

ball bounced. "No, I didn't see it bounce," the volunteer replied.

He turned to his playing partners, PGA Tour rookie Will Gordon and second-year player Robby Shelton, and told them, "They said it didn't bounce," and that he would check for an embedded lie. Crouching over, he marked the spot with a tee, put the ball in the palm of his hand and kept probing the turf for about 5 seconds when he called for an official. And then he poked around for another five seconds.

"I believe it broke ground, but I'm going to let you make that call," Reed told Brad Fabel, the rules official.

Fabel didn't immediately know what he was talking about because Reed had placed the ball about 8

feet away. Reed showed him where the ball was, Fabel poked around and agreed there was a "lip," meaning the ball had broken the plane of the soil. Free drop.

The procedure Reed followed wasn't illegal. It wasn't even necessary for him to call for an official. Rory McIlroy didn't ask for a ruling when the same thing happened on the 18th hole that day. And according to McIlroy, Rory Sabbatini also took relief from an embedded ball on the 15th hole Saturday.

The rule (16-3) allows players to proceed as if the ball is embedded provided it is "reasonable to conclude" based on the information at hand.

Reed wasn't careful, either. The lie was suspect enough to call for a ruling. Even the

rules official working the broadcast, Ken Tackett, suggested the "best practice" would be to leave the ball where it was until the official arrived. That would eliminate anything questionable.

And with Reed, there are bound to be questions.

Adding to the firestorm was video that clearly showed the ball bounced forward. That doesn't change anything. Players can act on only what they know at the time.

But with Reed, it changes everything, and his response after the round only raised another question.

"If we saw the ball bounce or if someone said the ball bounced, then I never would have marked the golf ball," he said. "You know when the ball bounces, it's almost impossible for it to break the plane."

McIlroy unwittingly came to his rescue by having the same thing happen, which wasn't discovered by CBS until after the third round. It appears his ball on the 18th hole went slightly forward, though video wasn't quite as clear as it was for Reed.

"On my life, that ball of mine was plugged, it was in its own pitch mark, so I took relief," McIlroy said.

By the book. Except the names of the characters are different.

"We know who they are," Tom Watson said long ago, without offering names, when asked about cheating on the PGA Tour. The list probably is longer than the people who run golf and preach its honor system would like to admit. □

Federer targets tournament comeback in Qatar next month

BASEL, Switzerland (AP) — Roger Federer is aiming to play his first tournament after two knee surgeries and more than one year out in Qatar next month.

Federer told Swiss radio station SRF on Tuesday he has targeted the Doha Open from March 8-13.

The 20-time Grand Slam

champion said he preferred a smaller tournament where he "wouldn't be in the spotlight too much and the stress is also a little less." Now 39, Federer last played in January 2020 at the Australian Open, losing in the semi-finals to Novak Djokovic while clearly struggling

with injury. Federer said he could play one more event after Doha — the following week at his off-season base in Dubai is an option — and then focus on the clay-court season. His main targets are Wimbledon, the Tokyo Olympics and, after he turns 40, the U.S. Open. □



In this Jan. 30, 2020 file photo, Switzerland's Roger Federer serves to Serbia's Novak Djokovic during their semifinal match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia.

Associated Press

MLB to start on time after players reject delay

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Baseball will proceed with an on-time start to spring training and the season after players rejected a plan Monday night to delay reporting by a more than a month.

"In light of the MLBPA's rejection of our proposal, and their refusal to counter our revised offer this afternoon, we are moving forward and instructing our clubs to report for an on-time start to spring training and the championship season, subject to reaching an agreement on health and safety protocols," MLB said in a statement.

"We were able to complete a 2020 season through Herculean efforts and sacrifices made by our players, club staff and MLB staff to protect one another," MLB said. "We will do so again, together, as we work towards playing another safe and entertaining season in 2021."

MLB proposed to the players' association on Friday that the start of spring training be pushed back from Feb. 17 to March 22, that opening day be delayed from April 1 to April 28 and that each team's schedule be cut from 162 games to 154. MLB believed the virus situation would improve during the month delay. Under the proposal, each team would have been



In this July 24, 2020, file photo, empty seats are viewed in Busch Stadium as St. Louis Cardinals starting pitcher Jack Flaherty throws in the first inning baseball game against the Pittsburgh Pirates in St. Louis.

Associated Press

allowed to be scheduled up to 12 split doubleheaders. Experimental rules for seven-inning doubleheaders and beginning extra innings with a runner on second base would have continued for a second season. As part of the offer, MLB included the expansion of the playoffs from 10 teams to 14 and extending the designated hitter to the National League for the second straight season, a plan the union rejected Jan. 6.

Bruce Meyer, the union's director of collective bargaining, called deputy commissioner Dan Halem

on Monday to inform him the proposal had been rejected, two people familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press.

The people spoke on condition of anonymity because that detail was not announced.

Halem then asked Meyer to make a counteroffer, and Meyer sent an email asking MLB to guarantee salary and service time in the event of an interruption, one of the people said.

MLB's proposal Friday included expanded rights for Commissioner Rob Manfred to interrupt the season. Halem responded to Meyer

on Monday and said MLB would agree to withdraw that part of the proposal but that each side would retain whatever rights it has under the labor and player contracts, the person said. Meyer responded Monday night that the union will not make any more proposals, that the union did not believe MLB's plan was designed to protect health and safety, and that players expect MLB to tell teams that it intends to start spring training and the season on time, the person said.

"The MLBPA executive board and player leadership reviewed and dis-

cussed the owners' proposal throughout the weekend and today," the union said then in its public statement. "The clear-cut result of these deliberations is that players will not accept MLB's proposal, will instead continue preparations for an on-time start to the 2021 season, and will accept MLB's commitment to again direct its clubs to prepare for an on-time start. Baseball's collective bargaining agreement, which expires next Dec. 1, calls for voluntary reporting dates of Feb. 17 for pitchers, catchers and injured players, and Feb. 22 for others. The mandatory reporting date, which few players stick to, is Feb. 27. While MLB's proposal said players would have received 100% of pay if all 154 scheduled games were played, the plan would have given Manfred the right to stop spring training, the regular season or the postseason if government restrictions prevented five or more teams from playing home games even without fans, if government rules restricted travel in the United States, if Manfred determined after consultation with medical experts and the union there is an unreasonable safety risk to players or staff, or if the number of regular major leaguers unavailable because of COVID-19 undermined competitive integrity. □



Chipper Jones, former Atlanta Braves player and Hall of Famer, speaks during "A Celebration of Henry Louis Aaron," a memorial service celebrating the life and enduring legacy of the late Hall of Famer and American icon, on Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2021, at Truist Park in Atlanta.

Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Hall of Famer Chipper Jones is

Chipper Jones assumes new role as Braves hitting consultant

returning to the Atlanta Braves in a part-time capacity as a hitting consultant.

The 48-year-old Jones played his full 19-year career with the Braves. He was elected to the Hall of Fame in 2018, his first year of eligibility.

The new role announced by the Braves on Monday gives Jones his best opportunity for an on-field role, if only in a part-time capacity, since his retirement following the 2012 season.

He previously worked with the Braves as a special assistant to baseball operations. He also has worked as a broadcaster for ESPN. Jones hit .303 during his career and led the league with his .363 mark in 2008. An eight-time All-Star and the 1999 NL MVP, Jones holds most Atlanta franchise hitting records. He hit 468 home runs and drove in 1,623 runs. Among switch-hitters, only Eddie Murray has more RBIs. Jones is the only switch-

hitter to hit at least .300 for his career with 400 or more homers.

Manager Brian Snitker's coaching staff including hitting coach Kevin Seitzer and assistant hitting coaches Jose Castro and Bobby Magallanes. Jones will be with the team for at least some portion of spring training.

The Braves' pitchers and catchers are scheduled to report to spring training on Feb. 17, followed by position players on Feb. 22. □